

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 14 and 18-31 are presently active in this case; Claims 1-13, and 15-17 canceled; and Claims 14, 19-20 and 30-31 are amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 55-156431; Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 05-243102; Claims 20-24, 26-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 05-243102 in view of JP 55-156431; Claim 18 was allowed; and Claim 16 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

First, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Thomas for allowance of Claim 18 and the indication of allowable subject matter in Claim 16. In order to expedite issuance of a patent in this case, Applicants have amended Claim 16 to be in independent form including limitations of base Claim 14, and have amended Claims 19, 20, 30 and 31 to depend from allowed Claim 18. The amendments in Claims 19, 20, 30 and 31 are supported by Applicant's specification, specifically at page 9, lines 10-12, lines 14-19 and page 11, lines 10-12 and 14-17, respectively. Thus, all pending claims are now in condition for allowance.

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Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application. The present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Richard D. Kelly
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 27,757

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/07)
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Edwin D. Garlepp
Registration No. 45,330